

## OPPORTUNITY TO OBJECT

### MEDICINE BOW LANDSCAPE VEGETATION ANALYSIS PROJECT (LAVA PROJECT)

#### FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT AND DRAFT RECORD OF DECISION

**Responsible Official:** Russell M. Bacon, Forest Supervisor, Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland

The USDA Forest Service has released a draft Record of Decision (ROD) and final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Medicine Bow Landscape Vegetation Analysis Project (LaVA Project). The draft ROD identifies Alternative 2: Modified Proposed Action, with additional modifications, as the preferred alternative for project implementation. Alternative 2 authorizes vegetation management activities on National Forest System lands, including some inventoried roadless areas, within the Sierra Madre and Snowy Range Mountain Ranges of the Medicine Bow National Forest. Vegetation management activities, including prescribed fire, mechanical, and hand treatments, could be applied on up to 360,000 acres to mitigate hazardous fuel loading; provide for recovery of forest products; enhance forest and rangeland resiliency to future insect and disease infestations; protect infrastructure and municipal water supplies; restore wildlife habitat; enhance access for forest visitors and permittees; and provide for human safety. Individual treatments would be authorized in pre-defined treatment opportunity areas over a 15-year period beginning in 2019 and ending in 2034. Authorization and implementation of individual treatments would be guided by an adaptive implementation and monitoring framework, as described in appendix A to the Final EIS and draft ROD. Specific aspects of the decision include:

- Up to 95,000 acres of stand-initiating or even-aged treatments (e.g., clearcutting);
- Up to 165,000 acres of uneven-aged or intermediate treatments (e.g., group selection);
- Up to 100,000 acres of other vegetation treatments (e.g., cutting green trees that are diseased, that have reached culmination of mean annual increment, or both; prescribed burning non-forested stands; removing conifer encroachment); and
- Constructing no more than 600 miles of temporary road, as necessary, to access treatment units.

Additional modifications to the Modified Proposed Action are based on comments received during the 45-day public comment period for the draft EIS and include, but are not limited to: clarifying the Modified Proposed Action to describe and depict where management actions and treatments would be emphasized during project implementation; adding a new monitoring plan to appendix A, the adaptive implementation and monitoring framework; and prohibiting commercial activity in the Sheep Mountain Wildlife Refuge. Additional modifications to the Modified Proposed Action are described in the final EIS.

The LaVA Project Final EIS and draft ROD are available online at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=51255>. Paper copies are available upon request and at the Forest Supervisor's office, 2468 Jackson Street, Laramie, WY 82070 and at the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District office, 2171 S. Hwy 130, Saratoga, WY 82331. For additional information concerning the draft decision, contact Melissa Martin, Project Manager, email: [mmmartin@fs.fed.us](mailto:mmmartin@fs.fed.us) or by phone at (307) 745-2371.

The LaVA Project draft Record of Decision is subject to objection pursuant to Federal regulations at 36 CFR 218, "Project Level Pre-decisional Administrative Review Process." The project is authorized by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act and is subject to 36 CFR 218 subparts A and C. Objections, including attachments, must be in writing and filed (regular mail, fax, e-mail, hand-delivery, express delivery, or

messenger service) with the Objection Reviewing Officer (36 CFR 218.8) within 30 days following the date of publication of this legal notice announcing the Opportunity to Object in the Laramie Boomerang, the newspaper of record. The publication date of the legal notice in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection (36 CFR 218.6(c)). Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Objections will only be accepted from those who have previously submitted specific written comments during a designated opportunity for public comment (36 CFR 218.5(a)). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities to comment (36 CFR 218.8(c)). Objections must meet content requirements of 36 CFR 218.8(d) and include:

- (1) Objector's name and address as defined in §218.2, with a telephone number, if available;
- (2) Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection);
- (3) When multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector as defined in §218.2. Verification of the identity of the lead objector must be provided upon request or the reviewing officer will designate a lead objector as provided in §218.5(d);
- (4) The name of the proposed project, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name(s) of the national forest(s) and/or ranger district(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented;
- (5) A description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project; if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and
- (6) A statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunity(ies) for comment (see paragraph (c) of this section).

The objection shall be sent to:

USDA Forest Service, Region 2  
Rocky Mountain Region  
Attn.: Objection Reviewing Officer  
1617 Cole Boulevard, Building 17  
Golden, CO 80401

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays

Fax: 303-275-5134

Email: [r02admin\\_review@fs.fed.us](mailto:r02admin_review@fs.fed.us)

(Acceptable formats for electronic objections are: rtf, pdf, doc, or docx)

Objections, including names and addresses, will become part of the public record and may be released under the Freedom of Information Act.